BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL
SANDFORD FLEMING LIBRARY

Pulpit

VOL. XI, No. 8 AUGUST, 1958

Preaching

MBOLS OF FAITH: The Beehive 2
Friedrich Rest

HE RICH YOUNG RULER

If You Met Christ Today 3
John Sutherland Bonnell

Take Hold of Eternal Life 6
Wesley P. Ford

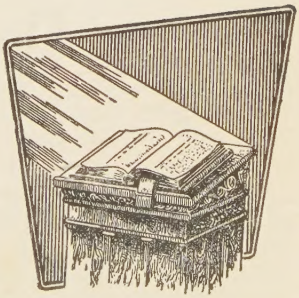
One Thing Lacking 9
Homer J. R. Elford

Life — Lost and Found 13
Gene E. Bartlett

ERMONS FROM THE SEASHORE

The Lighthouse 17
The Derelict 20
The Inlet 24
Trade Winds 27
Lowell M. Atkinson

VORTH QUOTING 32
Paul Hovey



EDITORIAL COMMENTS

"Sermons from the Seashore" is a series of sermons by Lowell M. Atkinson of the First Methodist Church, Englewood, New Jersey. Two years ago a similar summer series by him was generously commended by PULPIT PREACHING readers.

The second theme, "The Rich Young Ruler," represents a variety of interpretations and homiletic approaches to a New Testament figure who has ever intrigued and bewildered Bible readers.

For several months PULPIT PREACHING will include brief introductions to Christian symbols by Frederich Rest, author of **Our Christian Symbols**, a fascinating and valuable volume which is the most attractive brief presentation of the subject. The illustrations for Mr. Rest's series are by Harold Minton and are reprinted from the book through the courtesy of his publisher, The Christian Education Press.

Next month's themes will be "Adding zest to Life" and "World Communion." The October topics will be "Churches of the Reformation" and "Thanksgiving in Our Hearts."

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

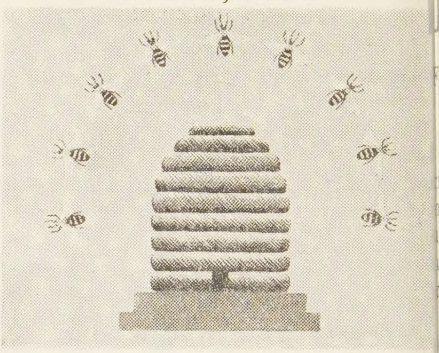
The Beginnings of Christian Art by D. Talbot Rice is a handsome book which records — in a clear style and through the generous inclusion of more than seventy color plates and illustrations — the story of the art of the church from earliest to medieval times. This excellent and authorita-

(Please turn to page 15)

SYMBOLS OF FAITH

THE BEEHIVE

Friedrich Rest, United Church of Chris
Evansville, Indiana



A recent symbol of the Church the beehive. The suggestion of man bees working together for the benef of the entire hive leads one to thin of the organization of individu members for the building up of th Christian Church. Sugar Creek Pre byterian Church, near Dayton, Ohi is the only church I've ever see with this symbol in one of its wi dows. Formerly the beehive, becaus of its hum and sweetness, was use as an emblem of such eloquent speak ers as Saints Ambrose, Bernard an Chrysostom. Eloquence was a cha acteristic of some church leaders, a well as a characteristic of industry.

I

In preaching it may be well t call attention to St. Paul's organis analogy, for here is the closest Bibl cal parallel. "Now you are the bod of Christ and individually membe

(Please turn to page 16)

Pulpit Preaching

CHARLES L. WALLIS . . . . EDITO
Pastor, Keuka College Church, Keuka Park, N. Y.

CHARLES L. ALLEN . . . . EDITO
Pastor, Grace Methodist Church, Atlanta, Ga.

Address sermon manuscripts and ed torial correspondence to Rev. C. Wallis, Keuka College, Keuka Par New York. Receipt will be acknow ledged.

Address subscription orders to PULPIT PREACHING, Post Office Box 2088, Jackson, Mississipp In Great Britain, address subscriptions to Religious Book Shop, 79 Reginald St., Luton, Bed England.

Published and printed monthly at Jackson, Miss., by the Tombigbee Publishing Co. Subscriptio Price: U. S. and Canada, $4.00 per year; other countries $4.50 per year: single copies $.50. Ente ed as second class matter at the Post Office at Jackson, Mississippi under the Act of March 3, 187

JOHN S. BONNELL
WESLEY P. FORD
HOMER J. R. ELFORD
GENE E. BARTLETT

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

YOU MET CHRIST TODAY

John Sutherland Bonnell, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, N. Y.

Emerson has said that the great ises in life are not marriages, deaths, d births, but the hour when, at a rn in the road, a man finds new oughts and new impulses fill his east.

The sage of Concord is not depre- ating marriages, deaths, and births, t he is pointing out that, the im- rtant thing about these happen- gs is what they do to us. New oughts, new impulses, are inspired the great events of life. Thoughts d impulses are mighty factors. They e the tools by which character is rmed. Many people become in- ardly transformed when they begin think new thoughts about them- lves. What we think about our- lves is of vital importance. There is almost irresistible tendency for a an to become what he believes him- lf to be. So the poet writes:

Could'st thou in vision see thy-
self the man God meant,
Thou nevermore could'st be,
The man thou art — content.

I

Jesus was constantly inspiring in e hearts of men and women new d loftier thoughts of themselves. nder His transforming touch broken, asted, defeated lives were quick- ed and renewed.

Phillips Brooks remarked: "The ef- ctive way to get rid of a bad past to get a future out of it."

The constant emphasis of our ord's ministry was to convince peo- le that they had a future. Always he as opening the gates of new life to iscouraged souls. He inspired confi- ence, hope, and courage. He saw in people not so much what they were, but what, by the grace of God, they might yet become. Even more important, he made them see it, too. Selfish, scheming, dishonest men, like Zaccheus, saw themselves clad in the mail of integrity, generous, kindly, honest, and they rose up to fulfill the vision. Artful, unscrupulous, debased women, like Magdalene, saw themselves modest, lovely, pure; and they went forth to claim their heritage. Not only did Jesus constantly hold forth before the eyes of men and women a vision of the shining heights that awaited them, but he imparted strength which enabled them to climb upward to this ideal. He gave them power to become the sons of God.

Oftentimes we ministers acclaim the success of Jesus in dealing with individuals. Today it may be profitable for us to think for a while about one person who, so far as the records go, was one of Jesus' failures. Why did the Master fail in the case of this young man? What barrier prevented the youth from entering upon the new life he saw opening up before him? It is noteworthy that he was a respectable man; well-to-do and spiritually-minded. He was a member of the highest tribunal in all Jewish ecclesiasticism — the Sanhedrin. He was no outcast, despised and rejected by society. He was a favorite of fortune. He was popular. He was sought after. Yet he was dissatisfied with it all. He was eager to achieve the best that life had to offer. Knowing that Jesus possessed the secret of abundant life this wealthy young ruler hurried up to the Master and made obeisance to Him. This fact alone is surprising —

a rich youth who is a member of the Sanhedrin pays homage to a young peasant. "Good Master," said the young ruler, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

John Drinkwater aptly observes:

When the high heart we magnify
And the clear vision celebrate,
And worship greatness passing by
Ourselves are great.

It is the greatness within ourselves that recognizes greatness anywhere, and the respect that this youth paid to Jesus was a testimonial to his own inherent possibilities.

Mark says that "Jesus, beholding him, loved him." Jesus loved him for what he was. He loved him still more for what he might yet become. Jesus was sure that there was basic soundness in this youth; that he had ambition not only to live, but to live nobly, to live for something.

A primary religious virtue is sincerity, and this youth had it in large measure. He was drawn to Jesus by the winsomeness of the Master's character. There are caricatures of Christianity in the world today which repel people. They say, "If this is religion, I don't want it." Now, this is never true of religion as Jesus expressed it. It draws people; it constrains them; it inspires them.

I have a letter in my files from a teacher of religion who writes as follows: "I have been studying the psychology of adjustment, and I feel that I have learned a great deal. Yet, despite this knowledge, nobody ever comes to me with a problem. I wonder if you can tell me what is wrong with my technique?"

I asked him to send me a few of his addresses in manuscript form. He did so, and I discovered that there was nothing in particular wrong with his technique, but apparently there was plenty wrong with him. His addresses were dogmatic, censorious, harsh. They lacked human understanding, as he himself lacked approachableness. It was quite obvious that he didn't truly love people. They were "cases" to him, not persons. He didn't love bad people as well as good people. It is easy enough to love good people. It is nothing to our credit to love good people. We have answered the test when we love bad people. It is easy enough to love pleasant people; the crux of religion is to love unpleasant people, because every bad person and every unpleasant person is a person who needs help. Something has gone wrong with them. They are bewildered, discouraged, defeated. They need understanding, sympathy, and a helping hand.

I suggested to this teacher that he devote much thought to a verse found in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel: "Fod God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved." God has not commissioned any of us to condemn the world or to condemn anybody, for that matter.

"Who art thou, O man, that judgest another," asks St. Paul, "for thou thyself doest the same things."

Now the young ruler came to Jesus because he saw nothing of that spirit in the Master, absolutely nothing. He came to Him because he was irresistibly drawn by the forthgoing compassion of our Lord.

II

I talked on one occasion with a physician who had frequently attended clinics held by the great Sir William Osler at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He said that Sir William would run his sensitive fingers over a patient's body, and oftentimes the touch of his fingers would reveal the seat of the organic ills. Jesus is the spiritual diagnostician of all the ages. He would strike His finger on the place and say, "Thou ailest here and here."

When this young man came to Jesus, this eager, impetuous, lovable young man Jesus instantly saw that his abundant possessions were entwined about his heart, stifling no

er impulses. So he proposed a drastic remedy. "Go," said the Master, ell whatsoever thou hast and give the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and, come, take up thy oss and follow me."

The youth knew that Jesus had ghtly diagnosed his problem, that had come to love riches more than loved his fellowmen or the higher e to which he aspired, but he uldn't answer the challenge; at ast, he wouldn't answer it. He went way grieved. With a sad heavy art he turned his back on Jesus.

I wonder how much he had? Who res? The only reason he has found place in history is because for one ief moment he had stood in the realing light of that wondrous Man o had nowhere to lay his head.

"How much did he leave?" asked e New Yorker of another concerng a certain prominent citizen who d just passed away. The other reied, "He left it all," and that's the th of it.

Does it seem to you that Jesus was edlessly severe with the young an? Perhaps he should have comomised and allowed the youth to ep a part of his possessions. No. ur Lord never accepts a divided algiance. When He comes to us He mes to reign. In any case, one has ly to look about him to see how uch evil is caused by false attitudes wealth. Wealth corrodes the heart man; it gives to people a false nse of power. There is a constant mptation to use it to dominate other ople. That is one of the worst posle ways to employ it. It tempts en to feel that they are independent God. There are people of wealth in is nation who take the attitude that ey are trustees rather than owners their possessions. They are enlightned benefactors of society. Unfortutely there are others whose one ought is for their own pleasures and mfort and who have no sense of reponsibility to their fellowmen.

Now, there is no evidence that Jesus advocated a life of voluntary poverty. There was Zaccheus, for instance. After his conversion he said to Jesus: "The half of my goods I will give to the poor, and I will restore four-fold whatever I have taken unlawfully." He promised to give fifty percent of his possessions to the poor, but there would be plenty left, because he was a rich man. Yet Jesus approved his act, for He said: "This day is salvation come to this house." He didn't say to Zaccheus, "Give away the other half, too." He was sure that the converted publican would make good use of it.

The disciples of Jesus were not by any means all poor men, as is sometimes assumed. We know, for instance, that four of them owned their own boats and nets and other fishing equipment, and had hired men to help them. They belonged to the middle class in Galilee. Little glimpses which we have into the home at Bethany where Jesus often sojourned reveals a home well above a poverty level.

No single class or segment of society monopolized the time or interest or sympathy of Jesus. Unceasingly He was the champion of the poor, but He was also a friend of middle-class people and occasionally of the rich. Always He warned His hearers that their possessions should be regarded as a servant and never allowed to become their master. "Ye can not serve God and money," said Jesus.

III

It is dangerously easy to read the story of the Young Ruler and say: "It doesn't concern me. My embarrassment is not riches." Yes, but what is your embarrassment? Anything that stands in the way of complete surrender to Christ must be swept away. The keynote of discipleship is surrender. As the poet says:

If thou could'st empty all thy-
self of self
Like to a shell dishabited,
Then might He find thee on the

ocean shelf
And say, "This is not dead,"
And fill Thee with Himself instead.

If you met Christ today He would not reproach you for your failures. I don't believe that He would talk about your failures at all. He would picture for you the kind of person you might yet become. No one of us has attained more than a fraction of the character and personality which is possible by the grace of God.

Oftentimes, of course, a battle will have to be fought before we can get rid of the inner defects and weaknesses and sins that block the path to spiritual progress: the inordinate love of pleasure, the desire to dominate which makes it impossible for us to have intimate friends, the hidden weakness that still holds possession of the citadel of our souls, our thoughtlessness and unkindness to those bound up in life's bundle with us, our lack of inner serenity, our fears, our greed, our hates. As Browning said: "When the fight begins within himself, a man's worth something."

Some of us will never be worth much until that fight begins. If we depend solely on our own moral strength, our own unaided resources, we shall fail as truly as the Young Ruler failed. Remember when life's supreme challenge comes that it can never be right to turn away from Christ. If we give Him the right-of-way in our lives. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. He imparts to us power to become the sons of God. Then shall we be able to say with that grand old Christian warrior, St. Paul: "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."

To follow truth as blind men long for light
To keep your hearts fit for His holy sight,
And answer when He calls.

That is the road to victory!

TAKE HOLD OF ETERNAL LIFE

Wesley P. Ford, Central Christian Church, Pasadena, California

Given the chance at the fountain of wisdom to ask a single question, what would it be? It is probable that for most the question would be related to that which the rich young man asked Jesus: "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Men through the centuries have sought answers to the meaning of life, its nature, its mystery, and its timeliness. To the perplexing question of life science has no answer, for science is limited to that which can be measured in the laboratory. Religion, acknowledging the fact of a personal creative God lays claim to the everlastingness of life. The creeds of Christendom have always included such an affirmation. "I believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ the son, and in the life everlasting."

Repetition does not establish the fact, but there is evidence beyond the matter of repetition. Creeds and life belief and action, are bound up together, and the highest conduct follows the highest affirmation. Jesus lived by a faith that dared and the quality of his life is evidence that it was not founded on a superstition. If no one has matched his conduct is it partly because no one has matched his faith and his ambition? "I am the resurrection and the life and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." No matter what the verdict of the laboratory is concerning this faith, it has always lifted toward greatness.

I

Even though faith in immortality makes for greatness, there are those who cannot accept it. We are con-

nted always by men unready to lieve the best. In contrast to the ristian faith's proclamation of an lered universe presided over by a d of love is the opinion of H. L. ncken: "The cosmos is a gigantic wheel. Man is a sick fly taking a zy ride on it. Human existence not so much a tragedy as it is a re." Bertrand Rusell says of reli-n: "I regard it as a disease born fear and as a source of untold sery to the human race."

H. G. Wells, in 1934, wrote: "Why people go on pretending about ristianity? Jesus was some fine sort man perhaps, but our Savior is a ssed up effigy of amiability; a nstrous hybrid of man and infin- making vague promises for the ating of simple souls. An ever ab-t help in time of trouble."

And Swinburne writes in the mood one tired of life:

We thank with brief thanksgiv-ing
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never.

Such opinions and moods are not common, and I do not choose now argue their logic. Rather we ask, w able are they for the foundation a social order that will sustain men the twentieth century? To accept se ideas would be to leave out love of God. It would be to elim-te the contribution of vicariousness which one says "for their sakes." would be to drop the contributions men of triumphant faith from raham to Jesus and on to the twen-th century. It would be to eliminate m history religion's influence which inspired men to live by their faith God. And man has no finer hour n that when he believes he is ing as God's man. Such opinions uld eliminate the cultural stream ich God-inspired living has pro-ed, including the founding of erica and democracy.

s life only a game of chance in ich we are to get while we can? Is it a tragedy with hopes and dreams, then pain, then nothing? Is it a comedy to be laughed through, or is life just a bore with no meaning and no escape? There is more at stake here than finding simple answers. The question is, are such notions big enough to live by?

Our generation has seen a new birth of power. I heard Edward R. Murrow in a penetrating analysis saying that we now have a supply of bombs 25 times as powerful as those which destroyed cities during the last war. These can be carried by missiles to targets 1,500 miles away. It is believed that the possible firing distance will soon be 5,000 miles. If we can fire bombs across oceans capable of destroying great segments of countries, the question is not only a philosophy about the future, it is, will there be a future?

The hope and the only hope for sustaining our society is to be found in those great moral and religious values which rise up against the background of eternity. The book of Ecclesiastes says, "He has put eternity into man's mind." There are some Biblical texts that rise up out of their context to stand on their own as penetrating insights. Here is one of them: "He has put eternity into man's mind," and we might add, "for such a time as this." If ever society needed the lift of a long view against which to rearrange its values, it is now.

II

When Paul gave instructions to Timothy he cautioned him about many temptations: "Shun all these," he said, "Aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called." Paul here acknowledges the many ideas that bid for one's loyalty. He is saying, choose those which will use you. And he adds, whatever else you grasp take hold of eternal life. Among the family of great ideas always is that of eternity. We, too, are called to take hold of the ideas that

will use us. Consider some contributions that taking hold of eternal life will make.

The first is a depth of character. Christian insight is that immortality belongs to the highest quality. It was of Jesus Christ that they said, "He is risen." This was not just an accident, it was a verdict upon a particular life that had lived by a particular excellence.. Excellence and permanence walk hand in hand .To reach out for eternal life is to seek attitudes and values that are worthy of permanence. Only such values will sustain us.

A second reason for taking hold of eternal life is the dignity and the quality with which this idea crowns personality. If life is only a cheap struggle in which the fittest live a little longer, then it doesn't matter very much how we treat others. But if a man is a unique creature of God, endowed with the capacity for eternity then how I treat him matters very much. If we ever fully understand that every person is of God and sacred before Him something will happen to our attitudes toward all others.

While thinking of personality we add that whatever permanence there is is in this realm. We know now that neither hills nor valleys nor cities nor civilizations are permanent. The highest in the creative process is personality which alone has the capacity for everlastingness.

Third, we take hold of eternal life for what we, in possession of this idea, can do for others. Men in a free society are at liberty to choose the ideas which use them. There are good men who discount immortality, but in the long process of history these have been lifted and sustained by the faith of millions who believe that goodness is marked for permanence. This is the faith which has given us our heritage. It has produced our beauty, our art, our benevolence, and in America our democracy. The faith of Easter morn has lifted society until it provides freedom even for men who deny it. Because it does sustain others some of us must take hold of eternal life.

And finally we take hold of eternal life because this is the idea that makes sense. There is evidence of a creative God. There is overwhelming evidence on the side of love as the creative force. Jesus Christ could not have made it through his bitter night if his faith had been founded on a myth. Always men who venture on the faith they have, come back believing even more. This idea brings common sense to great endeavor and it provides the only reasonable basis for judging life. One may say of himself that his life is not worth living but no man can say that of Jesus Christ! Through the centuries lives embracing every quality of goodness are seemingly cut down while vicariously lifting the weight off another's shoulders. Such lives are not dizzy flies on a merry-go-round. To assign self-giving devotion to a scrap heap is madness. He has put eternity into man's mind. Paul spoke the truth of some whom we have known when he said, "This mortal must put on immortality."

In Thornton Wilder's play **Our Town,** one character speaks for most of us: "I don't care what they say with their mouths – everybody knows that **something** is eternal. And it ain't houses and it ain't names, and it ain't earth, and it ain't even stars—-everybody knows in their bones that **something** is eternal, and **that** something has to do with human beings. There's something way down deep that's eternal about every human being."

God has given us life. Each pilot his own life out on the stormy sea adding as he goes shame or splendor. The great aspirations, the great hopes the great crusades in behalf of others have come from those who have eternity in their minds. Ideas are before us waiting to be used. And in the twentieth century much depends up

our choice. The Christian faith vs, "Take hold of eternal life and add splendor to the journey for yourself and for others."

NE THING LACKING

Homer J. R. Elford, Trinity Church (Methodist), Youngstown, Ohio

Asked to give some advice to beginning writers, Mark Twain wrote: he difference between the **almost** ht and the **right** word is really a ge matter — 'tis the difference beeen the lightning bug and the htning."

Anyone who has tried his hand at iting knows what was meant by at remark, just as the people who ad know it. We see it proved in ny areas of work and experience . A master artist, by putting a gle brush stroke to a painting n bring it from death to life. A ger, breathing at just the precise stant, changes the entire meaning of e score. Or, in other realms, the od cook adds just a pinch of seaning and changes a tasteless conction into a delicacy, just as an exrt mechanic makes one seemingly nor adjustment and causes the mor to run smoothly.

These examples, drawn from our eryday experience, illustrate what sus sought to emphasize when He id to the man, "One thing thou kest."

We will not spend much time tryg to establish the identity of this an. We meet him in the accounts ovided us by Matthew and Luke as ell as in Mark's Gospel. Matthew lls us that he was a 'young' man; ke calls him a 'ruler,' implying that was an important man in the comnity. The fact of the matter is at he is the ancient counterpart of y one of us who chooses to identiourselves with him. He was somee who was sincerely trying to find t what he must do in order to eny the quality of life which Jesus s succeeding in helping other peoe to discover. He had come to learn at when Jesus used those terms hich are now translated as "eternal life" and "the Kingdom of God," He wasn't speaking only of life after death, but of life here and now, and this man wanted some of this quality of life now.

I

The Scripture story (Mark 10:17-22) tells us as clearly as we need to have it laid before us that this man had done his best to keep the principal commandments having to do with man's relationship to his fellowmen. He had a wholesome respect for the lives of others which kept him from violating the sanctity of personal and family life. He honored other people's property and did not steal or defraud. He was honest. He honored his father and mother. In short, he was a really good man by the very best standards of his day or ours, whether you use the civil or the religious code as your yardstick. In fact, Noah Webster lists as one of his definitions of a Christian the rather insipid, but somewhat commonly accepted notation: "a decent, civilized, or presentable person."

Certainly we would hope that a Christian was at least all that, but if that is all we can measure up to, we have some traveling to do before we can have any real fellowship with our Lord's genuine disciples. We would have just as much right to say that we were athletes simply because we sat in the bleachers at every football game. Stating the case in very plain terms, there are a great many people who, on instances of their own selection, claim membership in a certain church when, as a matter of fact, their only connection with that church is that their parents used to take them to Sunday School picnics once a year when they were children; they have

to admit that they have never taken any membership vows or made any attempt at really living up to Christ's disciplines.

So it was that Jesus was able to tell this man that if he really wanted to enter the Kingdom of God quality of life there were some things he would have to do which would take him over and beyond these legalistic decencies. It happened that his particular obstacle, the one thing that he lacked, was a willingness to share his goods with people who were in need. Up to this moment he had sought to find real life through the amassing of a fortune and through the keeping of those laws which he didn't dare break for fear that such disobedience would ruin his chances of heaven. Our familiar Mr. Caspar Milquetoast may be the modern counterpart of some of this man's characteristics. We can't imagine him ever doing anything which would possibly get him into trouble; he fastidiously observes every rule in the book and never joins any organizations or lets his name be used on any letterhead for fear that ten years from now it might be discovered to have been an unwise move. He may have been the ancient counterpart of those of whom we sometimes say, "His halo is too tight!" Never willing to take the adventurous leap, he probably had never even thought of asking a girl to marry him. When it comes down to it, he was not a bad fellow at all as fellows go, but that was all one could say for him. He was good, but no one was ever given a chance to share his goodness. It was self-centered. Now Jesus accepts his invitation to tell him something that some people had probably wanted to tell him for a long time—to go and sell all that he has, give to the poor and then begin living the quality of life which Jesus was holding out to all men.

We dare draw out this portrait of this character because the Scriptures tell us that, after Jesus had performed His surgery upon him "his coun tenance fell, and he went away sor rowful; for he had great possessions. Nothing ever hurts quite so much a that truth which strikes us at ou most tender spot — at the plac where we have our greatest loyalt and affection. If Jesus had only tol him to keep some other part of th legalistic code; if he had only tol him to go read a book or say prayer, it wouldn't have been so bad That would have simply been mor of the same thing he had been doin with at least some degree of enthu siasm and confidence. But this On whom he had called "Good Master had asked him to give up that whic he most enjoyed — his money.

We can be reasonably certain tha if the lesson spoke only to those wh allow their hoarding instinct to stan between them and the Kingdom c God, it would be worth whateve space it takes in the Scriptures an whatever time we might give to exam ining it. However, it is all too eas for some of us to say, "Well, tha certainly is a lesson for the rich And we would want to go on int the next few verses of this same chap ter and read, "How hard it will b for those who have riches to ente into the Kingdom of God!" Unfortu nately for anyone who is of that tur of mind, the lessons of Jesus have way of speaking to all of us, the poo as well as the rich, and all of us i between, and this lesson is no excep tion. Until the day comes when w feel we have fulfilled the instructio of Jesus to "Be ye therefore perfec even as your Father in Heaven perfect," we may be sure that it ca be said of us, no matter who we ar "One thing thou lackest."

Surely before we throw up screen of self-righteousness we wi want to make sure that whatev small amount of material goods w may have is not standing betwee us and real life. While it doesn't tak much more money to lift some pe ple out of one tax bracket into a

her, so it doesn't take very many ings, such as houses or furniture appliances or jewelry or automo- les, to cause some of us to forget iritual values. Too many of us con- se material prosperity with spiritual osperity and if we can but get a ise in income or some other mate- l possession which we have long anted, we feel that to be a sign om heaven that we are among the ect of God. Bishop Cushman's ords need to be underscored as he ys that when a man comes into osperity either God or the devil ins a disciple. Whenever we allow r regard for things to take prece- nce over our love for people and r love for God, then we can be re that there is at least one thing e lack before we can enter into the ingdom of God.

III

But supposing that we have man- ged to keep our sense of spiritual erspective; to take prosperity gra- ously, even though it is a rather mall prosperity when measured by at of some other people? Is that ll there is to it? Not quite.

Reading **John Wesley's Journal** we iscover what this text came to mean him. After graduation from Oxford e had come to the Georgia Col- ny as a missionary. He had hoped at this would lead to a vital Chris- an experience. Anyone who is at all miliar with his biography knows ow miserably he failed in this ex- eriment, managing to escape the col- ny with his life because he had so ncensed the authorities. Upon his eturn to England he set down in his ournal a searching appraisal of his piritual life. He recalled his college ays and wrote: "What I now hoped be saved by was: 1. Not being o bad as other people. 2. Having till a kindness for religion. And 3. Reading the Bible, going to church, nd saying my prayers." Of the time ive years out of college he could rite, "I still said my prayers, and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness." It was not until after his ill-fated missionary journey to America and his return to England that he was able to write these words: "In my return to England, January, 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced that the cause of this uneasiness was unbelief; and that the gaining of a true, living faith was 'the thing needful' for me."

I believe that if we will face up to it we will have to admit that it is at that very point that we, too, have at least one thing lacking. Like young Wesley we make high resolves not to be as bad as many people we could name; like the man in our Scriptures, we are going to do our best to keep the commandments. Likewise, we are going to have a kindness for religion; we are going to be at least sympathetic with the things for which religion stands; we might even go so far as to join with the negative chorus sung by those who say, "going to church never hurt anybody" or "go ahead and do what you can to make the world better, it won't do any harm" — which is about as devastating a piece of discouragement as anyone can ever offer to those who earnestly want to do something to bring in the Kingdom of God. Moreover, we read our Bibles. Probably it is fortunate that no one knows for sure exactly how much we read our Bibles, or if we really let it speak to us when we read its words, but at least we can say that we read it. Yes, we may go the whole way with the matter and go to church rather regularly and say the same prayers we have been saying since our mothers taught them to us.

IV

We could no more dare minimize the importance of these things than

Jesus dared to fail to hold up the great commandments as basic to a good religious life. But, as He tried to point out to the young man, and as John Wesley discovered for himself, so we have ultimately to discover, that the one thing needful is to let religion get down deep into our very souls; we need to have a personal awareness of the power of Christ so that we are able to see everything else go and still have the feeling that as long as we have Him, nothing else matters.

Some thirty years ago a local preacher was addressing an open-air meeting in Bristol, England. He was trying to make the point that Christ is the answer to all our problems and the solution of all our troubles, something that is eternally true, but often difficult to get across. He was trying his best, with his limited education and training, when a large man began to heckle him and shouted out, "Stop that nonsense. What do you mean talking like that? Don't you realize that economic laws govern the situation and Christ has nothing to do with it? That is just the kind of stuff you people talk. That's the way you bluff people. Go and talk to the unemployed like that and see what they say!" There was no answer until a man very near the front stood up and said, "I am not used to speaking, but I can answer that. I am very poor, and I have a wife and three children, but if you take Jesus Christ out of my life, I have nothing left. He is greater than my poverty, and I love Him."

But presume that there are those among us who have met all the requirements which we have mentioned: Succeeded in keeping their material and spiritual values in proper perspective; observed all of the formalities of religion and gone the final step and found Christ to be a living companion in their lives. Is that all there is to it? I'm afraid if we listen we will hear Him still saying, "One thing thou lackest." It is His word, "Come, follow me."

Jesus asks that we be willing to really do something for Him. In the case of the man in our story it was to use the income from his property for those purposes which were near to the heart of God — the caring for the poor. It means that we must be willing to devote our talents — whether they be talents of money or capabilities, to His service that His Kingdom may be established. There are so many wonderful people in the world, and many of them are among the most loyal church members who ever took the vows, but somehow they have never caught a vision of the opportunity which is theirs really to do something in the name of and in the spirit of Christ. They forget, if they ever knew, that Jesus said to us, "And as ye go, preach, saying 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Years ago a young, newly ordained, minister in the Church of England felt himself called to work in the East End of London among the dock workers and their families. Years later he told how it came about. He was in the chapel preparing to take communion to some shut-ins and while he was kneeling, praying for them one by one, the prayer became a picture of all the sufferers in that district who were known to him. He said, "Then I saw our Lord in the midst of them, with His hands behind His back, looking upon them with great tenderness and love. Presently He began to turn, and then I knew why His hands were behind His back. They were tied — just as they had been when Jesus stood before Pilate and the crowd. The interpretation of the vision came swiftly. The hands which wanted to touch and heal the sick were held back . . ." for lack of someone to untie them; for lack of someone to go out and do His work for Him in His name.

That may be the one thing thou

ckest — to go out and really do mething for Christ to help Him in is saving of the world. It may be at He expects you, because of the rticular talents which He has given u, to go and preach or to teach. It ay be that He is expecting you act-lly to heal the sick; to bind up the oken hearted; to set at liberty them at are bruised. It may be that He waiting for you to use your goods some particular way so that He will be able to carry on His work in the church, in some hospital, some home, some school, some seminary. I'm very sure that only when we untie His hands and join hands with Him in these words of healing and redemption can His kingdom become so real that we can enter into it and thereby have the life which we want for ourselves here and now and eternally.

FE — LOST AND FOUND

Gene E. Bartlett, First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California

The Rich Young Ruler had everything we think we want — wealth, cognition, security, fine background of home, excellent religious aining, and a reputation for being highly moral man. But from him me that surprising question, "What I still lack?" What do you supse brought it on? Was it waking e morning to discover that he was ding no joy in his possession and peace in his morality? Or, was it at vague, undefined restlessness so ep that it could not be located, but real that it could not be doubted? mething caused him to ask, "What I still lack?"

If I understand us at all, who have me to the place of sanctuary this rning, this man comes closer to than many in the New Testament. our being here we may assume at most of us have a religious backound, have a respect for morality, d have a desire to live the good life. hile our sins are greater than most us would admit, often they are of e hidden kind. They are often of e spirit. What do we still lack? How we find the fullness of the Christn experience?

I

To begin, it is more than probable at most of us still need to make an reserved decision. Meister Eckhart as thoroughly descriptive when he id, "There are plenty to follow our Lord half-way, but not the other half." But it is that second half that makes all the difference in the world — or more exactly, in us. It is that second half, the rest of the way, that most of us are really hungering for if we knew it. It is the decision without reserve.

There is a homely figure of speech which may help see what I am driving at. Faith in our practical experience may be likened to moonlight, on the one hand, or sunlight, on the other. Now, moonlight has its place! It adds beauty, sentiment, and a sort of dreamy quality to life. And I for one am glad that there is such a thing as moonlight in the world.

But it is no substitute for sunlight. Sunlight makes things grow. It has in it the power of healing. It is a source of energy. Men conceivably could live without moonlight, but they could not live without sunlight.

The picture for many a modern Christian is just here. His faith is moonlight, not sunlight. It is a good thing as far as it goes. It adds a certain beauty and sentiment to life. But that faith has never become sunlight, giving energy and healing, causing things to grow, bringing warmth direct and not reflected. This I deeply believe to be the most urgent need of modern Christians. Their faith is good as far as it goes, but it needs to have a new direct relationship with Jesus Christ.

One of the essentials for this transition is to review your decision. Is it without reserve? Now, that isn't easy. To the contrary, it is so difficult that he couldn't do it at all if God did not promise His help. If our faith is to move from moonlight to sunlight we shall discover again some of the vigorous and strenuous notes in Jesus' teaching. I was interested in discovering only the other day that in the original Greek that phrase which is translated, He that loseth his life, is far more vigorous than we have supposed. Most of us have thought of the term "lose as meaning something casual and even careless. That's the way most of us lose things. But this isn't what Jesus meant. There is a deeper note in it. He who **wills** to lose his life shall find it. He who deliberately chooses — that's the note of it.

When is a decision unreserved? Strikingly, the problem with most of us seems not that of saying, Yes to Christ as much as saying, No to something else. Few, if any, here would have any problem at this point. Our hearts already go out to Christ. He needs no advocate. But we have not yet learned the other side of it, how to say, No to the other things that He might have priority. We believe in prayer but do not yet say No to sufficient things to allow time for it. We believe in the spiritual interpretation of life, the Kingdom first, but have not yet learned to limit the material. We believe in the church, but not yet enough to say No to some other things in order that the church may have first claim upon our time and talent. Surely, there are new depths waiting upon our unreserved decision.

II

Or again, some of us do need an unafraid freedom. It will be easy for me to be misunderstood at this point, but a deep pastoral concern prompts me to deal with this. Frankly, I often yearn to see some people set down some religious baggage they don't need to carry any more. It was no small part of the concern of the Master to set people free, and He did it by saying in all the load of the commandments you carry, there are only essentially two, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and thy neighbor as thyself." And I wonder what it must have meant to a man, who had gone through all the years of his life to that time living by a kind of taboo concerning dozens of laws that must not be broken, to hear Jesus speak this word that set him free? That must have been an emancipation proclamation for sure.

The whole matter is expressed in a humorous incident in the Old Testament of David and Saul. We all remember the story of David meeting Goliath with his stone and his sling. But some may not remember that they first tried to put Saul's armor on him. After all, they reasoned, if this boy were to go out and face the giant he ought to have the best armor he could, so they gave him the king's armor. But the result has humor in it. It says, "He could not go." And I can see David standing there all weighed down by another man's armor so heavy that he couldn't even walk. How much better when he set that aside and took the stone and the sling which were his own and went out to meet his adversary.

This is a freedom which needs to be won by some of us. Christ did not come to give us more taboos among the many, more things that could not be done. When one accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, it is an act of freedom. It does not mean that he has to accept a great many earlier interpretations or primitive stories that only confuse instead of clarify his faith. Jesus Himself came not to destroy but to fulfill. And that fulfillment is a freedom. Some of you have a much fuller experience ahead when you realize that nobody compels you to wear another man's armor. Much better honor Christ by the stone and sling of your own faith.

u are invited to unafraid freedom.

III

Deeper than these I think is an-
her need. It is for our unashamed
pendence.

There is a heresy in our time. It
the heresy of self-sufficiency. No
e could calculate how much anx-
y, unhappiness, and tension have
en caused by this false doctrine.
gainst this stands the good news,
e great good news of the gospel of
rist. We are inescapably depend-
t, and God is lovingly dependable.
at is the good news. That's pre-
ely the gospel. Oh, the tragedy and
e pity of trying to make a false
ilosophy work.

There is something in the heart of
man which nothing but God can
tisfy. This is the heartbreak of an
ur like this, that all too many men
to solve their security by trying
possess more, or to cover up the
unted feeling of being unloved by
king any cheap substitute they can
d. This is the great atheism of the
ur. It is not in argument. There is
new argument against God. It is
t in powers or parties calling them-
ves atheists. The great atheism to which the gospel of Christ must address itself now is that which falsely believes that the spiritual needs of every man's soul can be met without God.

A chaplain in World War II related a telling incident on Iwo Jima. When one of the first waves hit the beaches a lad was hit and fatally hurt. Under a withering fire the chaplain elbowed his way along the sand to the side of the injured boy. "Son," he said, "is there anything I can do?" And the boy in agony gasped, "Say green pastures, say green pastures." And then it came to the chaplain what he wanted, and he began, "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul." And the agony gave way to peace and the end was quiet. But is there any time in life or any condition when a man does not need to "say green pastures, say green pastures"? Can you conceive of any success, any achievement, any state of strength that finally overcomes man's necessity to say, "green pastures, green pastures"? Better the unashamed peace that says, "The Lord is my shepherd" both now and forevermore.

OKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING – (Continued from page 2)

e volume will have many appeals
pastors, students of the church and
men, for it brings into focus a
ld of achievement which has gen-
lly been overlooked. (Abingdon
ess, 223 pp., $7.95.)

They Met at Philippi is a devo-
nal commentary on Philippians by
rroll E. Simcox and handles with
editative simplicity and reverent
umen the mind and meanings of
ul, offering freshness in insight and
aluation. (Oxford University Press,
4 pp., $3.75.)

The Twelve Christ Chose by Au-
ey Smith, a splendid basis for a
rmon series, records the historical and legendary materials about the apostles, abounds in historical and theological background, and adds considerably to the relevance of these men to our understandings and thought. (Harper & Brothers, 178 pp., $3.)

Prayer That Prevails by G. Ray Jordan is a persuasive and compelling testimony about the how, why, when, for what and to whom aspects of prayer. Written in the belief that "an individual can study prayer and cultivate it with assurance of ever-deepening understanding and ever-increasing effectiveness," this book has dimensions of depth and is written with

engaging verve. Much illustrative matter adds homiletic usefulness. (Macmillan Co., 157 pp.. $3.)

Fathers of America by Elisabeth Logan Davis is an unusual book with a more than ordinary appeal. Here are sketches of the lives of fathers of fifteen American leaders, including the fathers of Woodrow Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, the Rockefellers and Billy Graham. The book is more than a collection of informal biographies; it is a portrayal of the kind of homes and family faith which produce greatness of purpose and spiritual vitality. (Fleming H. Revell Co., 159 pp., $2.75.)

The Meaning of Baptism by John Frederick Jansen is a companion to the author's **Guests of God.** Twenty-one meditations on baptism, devoid of theological and denominational partisanship, will help pastor and people to discern new truths and comprehend traditional values in an ordinance we accept without question, but which we often do not thoroughly appreciate. (Westminster Press, 125 pp., $2.50.)

THE BEEHIVE — (Continued from page 2)

of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prohpets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues" (I Cor. 12:27-28). The functions of the various parts of the body suggested earlier in the same chapter help us to see the folly of jealousy, the interdependency of all parts, and the goal of harmony or the absence of discord. As paralysis is devastating to an individual, so chronic dragging of the feet and backbiting are symptoms of sickness in a church. The need of the Great Physician is indicated.

David Grayson's **The Countryman's Year** contains some thoughts and observations on the beehive which may stimulate comparison and contrast. Pity for an injured bee is non-existant in the bee society. On the other hand, any bee will instantly give up its life for the safety of the swarm. The bee eats, works and sleeps when it pleases, apparently according to bee law. Although no bee obeys any other bee, there is an instinct for industry that works for the common cause.

The march of faith in the conquest of evil calls for united faith and action wherever possible. The goal is to make the world a better—sweeter—place for all, each doing his part.

THE LIGHTHOUSE
THE DERELICT
THE INLET
TRADE WINDS

Sermons from the Seashore

Lowell M. Atkinson
First Methodist Church
Englewood, New Jersey

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Our text is from the Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter and the twelfth verse: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 'I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"

I suppose that when the hearers of Jesus received those words, the minds of many of them turned to the little island of Pharos, just off the coast of Alexandria, for there stood the light of the world. It was the first great lighthouse ever built, and was considered one of the wonders of the ancient world. It was a large structure some 100 feet square and 200 feet high, and in the time of Jesus it had been standing for two centuries. This great lighthouse was famous the world over, and for centuries every lighthouse was called a Pharos. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, and he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." And so from that day to this, men have turned to Him, and following His beacon light, have found Him the true Pharos. Christ is the light that guides through the darkness and gives to men the light which is life.

The lighthouse, of course, is just an elevated light, and the thought of an elevated light is even more ancient than the days of Ptolemy II, who built the great lighthouse at Pharos. The ancient Cushite priests in Egypt used fires in metal baskets for beacons to guide, and it is rather interesting that it was the priests who were responsible to keep the light. For hundreds of years the Romans used a similar system, guiding by beacon lights hung high on poles or trees or placed on tops of hills in metal baskets. And from that day to this the lighthouse has an interesting history, and one that always has about it an aura of romance.

I

The first thing I would like to say about the lighthouse is that it stands with a light that guides. It is a help to one who wants to find his way. Joseph Conrad, in what I believe must be his latest and one of his best books of the sea, entitled **A Mirror of the Sea,** speaks about the drama of the landfall. The landfall is simply the sighting of land when you come in from sea, the time when you "fall in" with the land .You do not realize how large the ocean is until you are out of sight of land. But it is a very dramatic thing that a ship sailing on an expanse of water so great that you cannot see land anywhere, should be able to come out of that great, wide expanse, and find some tiny spot of land which is its destination, which on a map would be only a pinpoint. Finding your landfall when you come from the great sea is a most thrilling and dramatic experience.

What is it that you usually see when you see a landfall? Usually you see a lighthouse. A lighthouse is put upon some elevated headland where it will be conspicuous, and so the lighthouse has its own place to play in guiding the mariner from the great expanses of the sea to that little spot upon the land which is his objective.

All about the seacoast of the United States there is a beacon line of guiding lights. As a matter of fact, these lights cover a vast shoreline of 10,355 miles. They are guides to mariners who come in from the open sea,

and they are guides to coastwise shipping along the coast.

There are many aids to mariners, but there are now 398 lighthouses standing as guides to shipping. On the island where we often go in the summer, on Long Beach Island, there is the famous Barnegat Lighthouse, not in service any longer, but a veteran of 100 years of service, very much loved by all who know it. It is now a state park visited by thousands, and a favorite place for people who like to paint. It has called forth the ingenuity of the rhetorical, and they have named it the "grand old champion of the tides — the Saviour of the sea." It is truly a light that guides, and brings the mariners into the inlet, so that from the open sea they can find their harbor.

II

These lighthouses remind us that we in the church are the lighthouse of the world, and our Gospel is the true light that shines. This light is the life of men. What a great responsibility we have! There is a fascinating book on lighthouses by Hans Adamson, called **Keepers of the Light.** He tells of the high sense of responsibility of the keepers of the light, for they know that issues of life or death hinge upon their character and their reliability, and it is true of us, too. We are responsible to send forth a true light that will guide to a person's true haven. To fail is tragedy.

There was a woman lighthouse keeper in San Francisco Bay who showed great courage and sense of responsibility in one of the great fogs that are characteristic of that coast. The fog-blast mechanism became disabled, and knowing that many ships would depend on the sound of that fog blast to find their way into harbor, she turned it by hand so that it would give forth its accustomed sound; and this she continued to do for twenty hours, until the fog lifted.

The keeper of the Cape Cod lighthouse likewise showed great heroism and ingenuity. His light warned ships off a dangerous sand bank, and in a fog, his mechanism ceased to work and he rang his bell with one hand, with a watch in the other, for the bell had to be rung with certain intervals between the sound, so that the ships could identify which bell it was. All night long, with the watch in one hand and a rope in the other, he rang the bell with split-second precision. We feel that this kind of thing points up the nobility of life, and it inspires us to live in terms of responsibility and reliability, so that others, looking upon us, may find in us a witness of the true light which is the life of men.

III

There are also lights that fail. One of the very dark chapters in the stories of the seacoast is the chapter which tells about the wreckers. These are the people who use lights to betray and bring mariners to shipwreck. On Cape Cod they were called "Moon Cussers," for on moonlight nights they could not do their dastardly work, and when the moon shone brightly, they would "cuss" the moon. But when the night was dark and the ships at sea would be looking eagerly for lights along the shore, then the wreckers would carry lights out on the beach and gently lower and lift them, to represent the lights on a ship bobbing safely in a harbor. Some ship would follow those false lights and would be wrecked upon the sand bars, and then the wreckers would loot the cargo of the ship. What a tragic thing it is to take something that is good and fine like the light that shines from the lighthouse to guide, and use it with wicked and evil intent!

I imagine by now that you are saying, "Well, I would never do that!" But I want to say two things. First of all, do not be too sure. Peter said, "I'll never betray, though everybody else betrays, I'll never do it. I'll always be loyal." But the same night

betrayed by denying his Saviour ree times.

The second thing is that although e may not have wicked intent to tray and lead people astray, still e may lead people astray by our lf-heartedness, by our negligence, our sins of omission, if not by sins commission. John Wesley never ared an out-and-out wicked man so uch as he feared the halfway ristian. If a man were openly and mpletely wicked, he was not likely lead people astray. But if a person d the profession of Christianity—t not the inward joy of it, not the ward experience of it, not the in-ard power of it, not the inward namic of it—that person might lead hers astray. He might give the im-ression that Christianity is a joyless ing. He might give the impression at Christianity has no moral power change one's habits in life. He ight lead astray in many ways, just ecause he is a half-way Christian. Deliver me," said John Wesley, rom the almost Christian. If the Methodist Church ever fails, it will e because it has lost the power of odliness, while it has maintained nd retained the form of it." We have o ask ourselves honestly whether we re lights that fail, whether we give wrong impression, whether we lead eople on a wrong course. Our lives re meant to be lights that shine, that ad people the right way.

IV

I suppose that if there are some avigators in the congregation, you re thinking that the minister is a lit-e old-fashioned in his subject mat-er, because lighthouses are not being sed as much today as they once were. Let me take just a moment to ndicate that I do know that. But note hat there is one continuing purpose, lthough there are changing methods. nd although the period of greatest mportance of the lighthouse is past he years, roughly, from the Civil Var to about 1920), and while now we are using light ships and radio beams and loran (which means "long-range navigation"), radar, guided buoys, fog signals—and all kinds of new electronic devices—still there is one basic principle: that these devices of light and sound are there to guide, help and warn. And those who make them and those who keep and service them, must still have the basic virtues of reliability and responsibility.

The United States Coast Guard has a shipyard in Curtis Bay, near Baltimore, Maryland, and they take great pride in all their work. Their watchword is **reliability.** Here is one sentence that I want to quote about their work. Hans Adamson says, "Every man knows that the breakdown of a piece of mechanism, the failure of a simple switch, may mean the difference between life and death among men who place a complete dependence in a light that stabs through the night, on the hoot of a fog horn, on the chime of a wave-worked bell." It is the same principle, is it not? And whether we use new methods and new programs in our church life, the question is still the same. Are we reliable in our witness to Jesus Christ? Do we still send a gleam across the waves? And I am not terribly interested in **how** you do it, but are you doing it? Are you giving a guiding light?

V

Because the lights are provided for us does not mean there is not a tremendous challenge. There is a challenge of the lights. You have to know what the lights mean, and every navigator has a copy of the Coast Guard's "List of Lights." He has to study that book until he knows it thoroughly. If there is a signal, he must understand the timing of the signal and know which signal it is. And so a great responsibility is thrown upon the navigator himself. If the lighthouse represents for us the grace of God, then you can see that the grace of God does call for intellignce and faith, ex-

ercised to the full. We are not saved automatically, but we have got to respond to the overtures of God with intelligence and faith, and when His light shines, we have to know what it is and what it means. Does it stand for guidance into a safe harbor? Does it indicate a shoal to be avoided? Does it beckon us to come that way, or does it mean that we must avoid something of which it gives warning? The mariner has to know. And we have to know, as Christians. The Bible is our "List of Lights." We have to know it, study it, understand it, find the things that are to be approached, and the things that are to be avoided, as we make our way through life.

The phrase "The Saviour of the sea," applied to Barnegat Lighthouse, reminded me of the great history of heroism of those engaged in lifesaving activities from the lighthouses. For until the early years of this century, the lighthouse keeper was also supposed to be a lifesaver. He not only kept the light, but if there were some ship in distress in his vicinity, he was supposed to go out personally and give help. And this thought of the lighthouse that comes to life and goes forth to save, reminds us of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. He promises us that we will have the light of life. But He is not just a light to be looked at. He is a light that comes to life and walks out into the places of danger to save and to rescue!

In our own country there is a tremendous history of heroism on the part of the lighthouse keepers who have gone forth to rescue and to save. For many years a rather dull formula was used to sum it all up: "During the fiscal year, services in saving of life and property and acts of heroism performed by employees of the lighthouse service upon vessels or at stations on thirty-seven occasions." But every one of those occasions meant that someone risked his life to save life, that someone went forth to rescue and save. That is the spirit, the aggressive spirit of the Christian Church. We have a Gospel which is tremendous in its shining splendor, but it is not something just to be adored and looked at. Rather, it is a dyanmic that sends us out personally to help to counsel, to guide, to rescue, and to save. These things abide across the centuries—the responsibility to bring the light, which is the life of men, out to those who have need of it. May God make us responsible keepers of the light, that we may send our gleam across the waves.

THE DERELICT

The words of our text are found in the Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, the fourth chapter and the ninth verse: "Persecuted, but not forsaken." The figure of speech is very like the arena. Paul is thinking of the hard-pressed persons in the arena, set upon by gladiators or perhaps by beasts. They are in dire straits, and yet, although set upon, persecuted and harassed, they are not forsaken. The word forsaken actually means abandoned, and the Latin word for abandon gives us the word derelict. What a wonderful thought it is that no matter how hard pressed we are and set upon and harrassed by the things of this life, we are not abandoned by God. He does not give us up, even though it would seem so because of the difficulties of this world. We may be persecuted; we are not forsaken. No man is a derelict in the sight of God.

I am thinking of derelicts, however, in terms of a ship at sea that has been abandoned, and this is the way in which we commonly use the word. When we speak of a derelict, we are speaking of a ship that has no higher control; there is no person to steer it, no person to direct it; it has been

andoned at sea. It is literally for-ken.

We think of a derelict, also, as a ip which is not only abandoned d forsaken but which is drifting thout any purpose of its own. It being driven by wind and by water rrents. Very likely it will be driven o some place of danger and ecked upon rocks or sand shoals. e reason I thought of this subject s that for many, many years I have en going to a place called Ship ttom, and the name of the town mes from a derelict. The bottom of ship became a familiar sight there, d the little community was named ip Bottom.

The third thing you notice about a relict at sea is that the derelict is itself a hazard and a menace. Just cause it does not have any human ntrol, because it does not go on a course and move with a purpose at can be ascertained, because it is ifting about aimlessly, it is in the y and it becomes a threat to navi-tion.

We do use the word derelict also regard to people. Although in a profound sense you may say that re are no human derelicts because d does not forsake His people, yet re are those who live as if they re forsaken and abandoned. You probably conjuring up now a men-picture of the Skid Row bums o have just given up, who have rrendered all higher control, and o are driftitng at the mercy of im-lses and desires. But I am not go-g to talk about somebody else. I n going to talk about ourselves. Is possible that people such as this ngregation and its minister could in danger of becoming derelicts? ould people who are reasonably in-lligent, educated, cultured and civ-zed possibly be in any danger at is point? There is a real peril here.

I

For one thing, unless we believe in higher control, we are in danger of becoming derelicts. One of the appalling things in modern civilization is the way in which the word control has fallen into disrepute. The popular philosophies of the day are not philosophies that say that a man should live a life of control and set a course and a destination and encourage us to sing (as we have sung), in faith, "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me." Rather, the popular philosophies speak of doing what comes naturally, obeying your impulses, following the lines that are related to the world of the animal rather than to the world of man. This curious way in which our modern world is going wrong stems very largely from the philosophy of Rousseau in the eighteenth century, who said, in effect, "It's too stuffy to live a life where you are always being correct and being corrected. Why bother about being correct? Just do what comes naturally. Just follow your impulses, rather than live in a kind of strait jacket of etiquette and form." This was the emphasis made by Rousseau. Again, why should your children suffer from a formal kind of education that limits them in all their natural spontaniety? Why bother them, for instance, with books if they do not like to read them? Rousseau said very plainly, "Let them do what they please; if they want to run, let them run; if they want to scream, let them scream; if they want to kick, let them kick." Now all this sounds, not like the eighteenth century, but something like the twentieth century, does it not? We are being asked to be derelicts and to surrender the higher control and to put ourselves adrift, as if we were some kind of slightly more clever animal, unrelated to God's world of purpose.

I say that what God wants of us is not that we should be derelicts without any higher control. What He wants of us is that we should have rule over our own spirit. One of the great texts of Proverbs tells us that a man who has no rule over his own

spirit is like a city that is broken down and has no wall, a ruin. John Milton, who loved that text, himself lived in the spirit of it. As you know, he gave his eyesight in the service of his country, and after he had been blind three years he wrote a sonnet to his friend Cyriack Skinner, in which he said:

Yet I argue not against Heaven's hand or will
Nor bate a jot of heart or hope;
But still bear up and steer right onward.

This is a different world, you see. This is a world of purpose. Persecuted, but not forsaken; blind, but bearing up, and steering right onward. And somehow I think this is what God really wants of us. He wants us to be human beings, and the essential mark of a human being, of course, is that he has control.

Again, one of the perils of our time, to which we are getting all too easily accustomed, is the abandonment of control through drinking alcoholic beverages. One thing that drinking alcohol does is to destroy the higher controls. And this, at our universal peril, we are coming to take for granted.

This world in which we have such powers released as man has never had at his disposal before, is not a world in which you dare let go of higher controls. This is a world where we cannot afford the luxury of being derelicts, even for an evening. We are meant to live a life of control for God.

II

I would also like to say that we are meant to set a life's course. We are meant to live with a purpose that points toward a destination, to chart a course that leads to a haven. And yet we find so many people adrift, simply going with the current of the time, or going wherever the wind blows. Or, as Peter Marshall used to say, if you do not stand for something you will fall for anything. Now there is no question in my mind abou what God wants of us. He does no want us to be like that strange worl of creatures, jellyfish and all the rest which are at the mercy of the drif of the current and the blowing of th wind. He wants us to chart a cours and to reach a desired haven. Dant said, "Ye were not meant to live th life of senseless brutes, but virtue t pursue and knowledge high." This i what it meant to be a man and to b alive—not to be a derelict in an sense, not to be the victim of th fads and fancies and passing fashion of the hour; but to set a course, an not only to be in control but to b going somewhere, under the guidanc of God.

I have been reading recently i Rachel Carson's writings about th great currents of the ocean. In imag ination you must withdraw into spac from this planet and look back upo the earth to catch the grandeur o them. They sweep about in the At lantic and the Pacific like giganti eddies, affected by the spinning o this planet and the pull of the su and the pull of the moon and th blowing of the trade winds. The Gul Stream, for instance, which goes abou in clockwise direction in the Atlantic roughly 100 miles wide and a mil deep, like a river in the sea, follow a certain path, goes at a recogniza ble speed, a little more than thre miles an hour.

But the real drama of the situatio emerges when man has to do wit the currents, and the purpose of ma begins to deal with the currents c the natural world. Many centurie ago, Ponce de Leon, in sailing again the Gulf Stream, not quite recogniz ing what it was, was astonished t find that while the wind was blow ing his vessel forward, in fact he wa going backwards. And he did n know quite what to make of it. In later century, investigations wer made, under Benjamin Franklin, t find out why it was that some shi could get across the Atlantic so muc

aster than others, and it was then evealed by New England captains, hat an effect the current had in eterring the progress of a ship that as sailing against it.

Now all this has a certain mild interest, but the real importance begins to emerge when you see men etting a course with purpose, not eing at the mercy of the current, not ust going along with the drift, not ust being blown by the wind where he wind is blowing, but using the urrent for higher purposes. This is hat you and I are meant to do. If e drift with the fashions and fads the time, then we will be in danger of becoming derelicts. But if we are to oppose the wisdom of the enturies to the wisdom of the hour, if e dare to take the Word of God om His eternity and to cling to that, egardless of what the contemporary orld thinks of it — then we will be ving lives of genuine purpose. We hall be setting a course, we shall be laiming God for our pilot, and we hall be doing what God really wants f us.

III

There is a tremendous contrast between the derelict that drifts and finally becomes a total wreck, and the hip that actually sails under the high ontrol of someone who has purpose nd destination and the resolve to ccomplish his purpose. Every now nd then I go back to the writings f Henry Froude, the great essayist f the nineteenth century, and especially to his fascinating essay entitled "England's Forgotten Worthies." Here we have a sense of the rue dignity of purposeful men. We ead these stories of men on the high eas, especially in the days of the enaissance, who dared to sail in erms of great danger for a great urpose. In those days it seemed as f the nation of Spain represented the ppressive cruelty of Roman Catholicism and the Inquisition, whereas England came to be champion of the new Reformation and the new Protestantism. And so the carrying out of these great principles often took on the form of conflict at sea between Spaniard and Englishman. And thus it is that you have the stories of these great daring men who sailed with a purpose — to explore, to adventure, sometimes to fight in the interest of the cause that they felt was right at that time. Some of the words that they left us are words that still stir our hearts. When Frobisher was sailing in the Arctic region in a tiny, frail ship, he found the ice was closing in about him. Valiantly he worked and fervently he prayed. He encouraged his men; they used every bit of wood that they could move to make a buffer between the ship and the crushing ice, and then, by the providence of God, at last a change in the weather made possible their escape. Frobisher wrote in his journal these simple words: "The ice was strong, but God was stronger." It was not just that he had escaped. I think he would have written great words, even if he had not.

When we set our course by God's will and by His truth, we know that we are meant for purpose. We are in God's hands, and it is better to die with honor than to retreat in shame, for God takes care of His own. We may be hard-presseed, but we need not be derelicts.

The choice that I put before you is whether you will resolve to live with your head high and your spirits valiant and strong, determining to live lives of purpose and control, charting a course, sailing to a destination, undeterred by fears, undismayed by the hazards, because God is your guide, and He will not forsake us, or whether you will just drift, a derelict on the ocean currents of life—respectable, perhaps; fashionable, perhaps, as you go with the winds of the time; but in the eyes of God, a derelict who might have belonged to Him. Let us chart a true course and hold valiantly to a life of discipline, control and

purpose, of which God will not be ashamed.

THE INLET

The Bible will not tell you much about an inlet, since the Hebrews were not seacoast people, and since they did not understand the sea and certainly did not like it. But one thing they were sure of, and that is that the land and sea were made by God and are under His hand. And so the psalmist cries in his song of praise, "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap; he layeth up the depth in storehouses."

As I was thinking about "The Inlet," I went back to some volumes of John and Charles Wesley and to those curious indexes that I like to scribble in the inside of the back cover, and I was interested to come upon several seashore expressions from the Wesleys. John Wesley spoke of "this isthmust of life." He told of "the ebbing tide of the spirit." When standing on that rocky point of England called Land's end, which juts out into the ocean and seems the very end of the earth, his thoughts turn to death, which he described as "life's last shore." His brother Charles, the 250th celebration of whose birthday we have been celebrating, when preaching at Oxford, used this phrase, which was the particular inspiration for our sermon: "inlets of spiritual knowledge." Charles said that the natural man, the man who does not know Christ, has no inlets of spiritual knowledge. The natural man thinks that his life is all right as it is, unchallenged and untroubled by the higher things. He lives a life without the refreshment and invigoration of the inrush of vitality and life from the great ocean of God's truth. He has no inlets of spiritual knowledge. Whereas the Christian comes to God in the time of worship, as we are coming today in this hour, opening his mind and heart and soul so that God's great truth can come rushing into his life, just as the ocean comes pouring through the inlet in the flood tide, bringing invigoration and power and new vitality and life.

I

The first thing, then, you would say about an inlet is that it lets in the water of the ocean into a bay, sound, or estuary, and links that little body of water with God's great ocean. Now it is quite possible to stay within the bay and to live in its little terms. But there is something exciting about an inlet. You will notice that people who visit the seashore gravitate to the inlet. There is the constant movement of the tide. You will not find there the still waters. The waters are not still; they are always restless and moving. They move in, they move out, but they are not quiet. The boats come in and the boats come out; the fish come in and the fish go out; something is always happening at the inlet. The most obvious thing that happens is that the ocean invades the land, breaks through this opening in the land barrier and comes in to change the whole life of the bay inside.

I like to think of worship as an inlet where we let God's spirit come flooding in, changing the whole life of the little bay of our experience, so that we are in touch with larger things, and so that the tang and saltiness of God's truth give new vigor and vitality to our little lives. May it never be said of us that we have no inlets of spiritual knowledge. Rather let it be said that we know that God has come into our lives with love. We know that we love Him, and we know that our only true life is in giving our loving loyalty to Him.

II

The second obvious thing about an inlet is that it lets out. The tides not only come in — they go out. The outgoing tide may be described as the scouring tide — the tide that cleans, and all the wrack of debris is swept

:t of the bay into the ocean and tt forever in the immensity of the a on the ebbing tide. So it is that the ebb tide the fish love to feed, the flats and in the little gullies the bay, catching the bits of vege-ble and animal matter that come ating out toward the sea on that bing tide.

We recognize there are many ings in our life that need to be let tt — things that need to be swept tt by the scouring tide, rushing rough the channel of the inlet into e mighty sea. If we could let God this with our lives, if we could t God really scour them, then how e we would be for creative living! we could just get rid of the things at we should get rid of — the re-embered grievances, the hurts, the s that we know we have commit-d, and of which we have repented t just cannnot forget — all these ings that entangle us and make life clutter, instead of a thing of clean-ss, all these things are meant to be ept out into that great ocean of od's redeeming mercy so that we n once again have free and clean es. The outgoing tide has its own ork to do.

The rhythm of the tides, in and t of the inlet, reminds us of the ythm of our Christian life — the take and the outgive. In the hour worship, we receive the inspiration God's spirit, singing His praise, ming into fresh knowledge of His uth, having a personal encounter ith God and knowing that life is go-g to be different because of His uch — all this is intake. And then ere is the outgive — giving out into e world in terms of what we are nd what we say and what we do, nd the inspiration of what we have ceived by the grace of God. And so e pulse beat of the tides reminds s of the rhythm of our Christian fe. We take in; we give out. As the ld Epworth League motto said, "We ok up; we lift up!" We look up and ceive inspiration and then, in the enthusiasm and vigor of that inspiration which comes from God, we lift up and make this a finer, stronger world of good.

III

Those of you who enjoy the seashore and go in and out of inlets in boats, or who have anything to do with inlets, will be waiting for me to say something about the hazards of the inlet. The inlet is always a dangerous place. It is a place where you must not go swimming. It is a place where small crafts may well be on the alert, for those swift tides and the strange eddies and currents can often do unexpected damage. Furthermore, the inlet is a place where the swift running tides conceal, to a large degree, shoals and sand bars, upon which a boat can come to grief.

There are hazards in the inlet, and the first thing that you must say about them is that you must know how to find the true channel that leads from the bay to the ocean and from the ocean into the bay; otherwise you will find yourself in trouble. And it reminds us of the hazards of life and the things that cause us to come to shipwreck. These hazards may be hidden shoals that we do not see or know about, but ignorance is no excuse. You may not know there is a sand bar there, but you will be stranded on it just the same. Or you may do something foolishly bold and think you will get away with it, only to find your boat taking in water because you had not counted on the great current and the great ocean swells of the inlet. So in life we must recognize that these hazards are here, and when we come upon them we have to suffer the consequences of not knowing or not being wise enough to take care. We know that what we need is guidance in the true way and in finding the channel that is deep and safe and that goes somewhere, in order that we may find our life's way. Not only do we have to find it, but we have to keep finding it, for life

is full of infinite variety and change. And so is the bottom of the inlet, for the ceaseless movement of the tides change the channel, picks up whole hills of sand under water, moves them from one place to the other, cuts new channels through the sand. There is constant change, and one mst know and find one's way.

In other words, finding the channel means you have got to find God's way and pledge yourself to it. As I listened recently to Billy Graham, I was thinking this is the big thing he is insisting upon: that people actually pledge themselves to God so that God will guide them in their life's true way. This is the first big thing in anybody's life. And the second big thing is to keep on doing it. For life changes —and so do you. One of the interesting figures of speech that Billy Graham used was this: We are like a little baby in our Christian life. The baby at an early stage learns to say something—perhaps "Dadda"—but if the baby twenty years later still says nothing but "Dadda," there must be something wrong with him. When a Christian becomes a follower of Christ, he learns some elementary things. But if twenty years later he does not know anything more, there has not been the growth and the development and the change and the maturing that there should be.

Two or three days ago, knowing that I was going to speak about the inlet, I thought that I had better go down to the seashore and look at one once again, and so we went down to Beach Haven Inlet. It has been a while since I walked the beach to this inlet. There was so much that I did not recognize. I was not quite sure about the course of the main channel. I was looking for an island that I remembered to the south of the main channel, but I did not see it. I do not know where it went. Maybe I was walking on it. There is always restless change in the inlet, and the captains of the boats that go in and out all the time have to know how the sand is shifting and changing, and the Coast Guard have to know how to place their markers properly to guide the boats. But the captains will tell you that often the bottom is changing far in advance of the changing of the channel markers. There are real hazards there, and there are real hazards in life.

John Wesley said, "I have been made over ten times." That is, as he grew and matured, he found that "new occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth." He found that at different periods in life there are different temptations, and in each period of life one has got to find the inspiration of God to regenerate his life so that he will be a growing Christian all the while. Not only did Wesley have a great evangelical experience at Aldersgate, but also he was made over again and again. There are shifting sands and shoals in the inlets of life, and we have got to find the true channel, and then keep finding it!

IV

Hazards are always there, and yet they are not without some meaning and helpfulness. It is as if God had made this life a precarious life, with some purpose largely beyond our understanding, and yet He can make all things work together for good for those who let Him. I was reading the other day in Rachel Carson's book **Under the Sea Wind** (one of the finest books ever written about the seashore), that the shoals that trip up the incoming waves rolling in from the ocean and send them spilling in white confusion, have a great practical purpose. They break that tough surface film over the water that separates it from the air. The oxygen of the air is put into the water, and it brings fresh vigor and life to the fish underneath the surface of the water. The very hazards have some purpose of helpfulness. If there were not hazards in life to brace our minds and our spirits, to challenge us, to make

alert, to make us attentive, to make use our minds and resourcefulness, s world would become like a stag- nt pool. We need these hazards of inlet that challenge and alert us l that make us know that we are ve.

A few months ago we were living a few weeks in Durban, South rica. This city has one of the great rbors of the continent of Africa. t here is the story in back of it. In ly days, that south coast of Africa s known as one of the most dan- rous coasts in the world, for the er mouths are all silted up; there shoals and sand bars, and ships ing along that coast again and ain would come to grief. Many uld be wrecked permanently and yond repair. In fact, in Durban, ich now is such a great harbor, in period between 1845 and 1885, ty-six known wrecks occurred. at is the difference between then d now? Some resourceful men built ong mole or jetty out into the sea, m the mouth of the harbor, and dged a deeper channel and a nar- wer channel. When the water came hing in from the sea, it flooded o the bay through that deep nar- w channel and ebbed out, once ain the same way. And so it was at the ships could sail through that annel, using the man-made inlet to ss the shoals in safety, and come and go out. The very hazards, you , had challenged the intelligence d resourcefulness of men, until they l something about it. It has been d, with reference to these ship- ecks, that all South Africa was set- d by shipwrecked men. The white n who sailed along that dangerous ast, when shipwrecked, stayed there live. There is no hazard that can- t be helpful, if we let God have s way.

And so, as we think of the inlet, th the refreshing tide from the open a flooding into our spirit we think God's great ocean of truth and ve, which, touching our life, gives it significance and vitality. We think of the tide ebbing out of the inlet, scouring the bay, cleansing life of its clutter. We think of those hazards of the inlet, which have their own mission and meaning, and which make us alert to life's challenge and responsibilities. Then we think of these privileges of worship and of what it means to let God really come flooding into your soul. It is God who commandeth the deep. It is He that is in control of all life with its promise, life with its responsibilities, life with its challenges. It is God who layeth up the depth in storehouses, and gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap. It is God who can bring the deep meaning of life home to our hearts. It is God who can send us forth to serve with the refreshment and the invigoration of His grace. The ocean of God's truth is at hand. Our worship is the inlet of spiritual knowledge that lets God come into our lives with the transforming vigor of His grace.

TRADE WINDS

Using as a text some words found in the third chapter of John and the eighth verse: "The wind bloweth where it listeth," or "the wind bloweth where it will." Now that text has sometimes been interpreted, in fact, usually has been interpreted as bringing to mind the capriciousness of the wind, as if it were endowed with a kind of intelligence, motivated by impulse. It blows here, it blows there; it is a symbol of caprice.

I think it is entirely possible to assert just the opposite. There is nothing at all in this text that suggests that when the wind blows where it will, that it does not blow with purpose. **Purpose**, of course, is a human word. Let us say trade winds are winds that blow with a certain regularity. They blow in a consistent direction. You can count on them at a certain time. They follow a certain track. And the word **trade** itself is

an old synonym of track. I think that when the winds of God blow, they may very well symbolize to us the purpose inherent in the very character of God.

We are all interested in the weather, and therefore, we are all interested in the wind. Those of you who go to the seashore on vacation know that the first thing you observe in the morning is the direction of the wind, for the weather will be determined by the wind, and what you do that day will largely be determined by the weather. And so you are interested in knowing how the wind is blowing. It is a symbol of our life.

Some time ago a great preacher of the early part of this century wrote some sermons on the winds of God, in which he spoke of the winds blowing from various directions about which we are told in the Bible. There were the winds that blow from the North and bring their message of impending trouble and calamity, because the enemies of the people of God usually came sweeping down from the North. There were the winds that blow from the East, bringing the hot, searing Sirocco from the desert and blasting the land. There were the winds that blow from the West, bringing the promise of rain as the moisture from the Mediterranean hits the mountain range that runs north and south through Palestine, and condensing, brings down the rains that give life to the land. There were the winds from the South, bringing a kind of balmy springtime to the land and to the spirits of the people, and yet, a treacherous wind. You remember how St. Paul distrusted the south wind just before the great storm in which he was involved at sea. The south wind blew softly. But Paul did not trust it, and he was right. The south wind blowing softly was a prelude to violent storms.

I find a tremendous symbolism in the story of the trade winds that follow a certain track or path. Even in the Indian Ocean, the strangest of all oceans, the monsoons follow a pattern. In one season they blow from Africa to Asia; in another season they blow from Asia to Africa. Ships that depend upon the wind can count on it, and so they trade back and forth, being blown by the monsoons from the one continent to the other. I think that when the Bible tells us that "the wind bloweth where it listeth," it suggests not just changeableness, although the wind does change, but it suggests purpose. And I want to touch upon some of these elements of purpose.

I have a certain right to talk about the winds because I received in the mail some time ago a Certificate of Aeolus. Some of you have these certificates. They are given you when you cross the Equator. The circumstances were not without interest, as we were flying south over the continent of Africa on a twenty-seven hour flight from Amsterdam in the Netherlands to Johannesburg in South Africa. The time passed rather slowly; at 19,000 feet you do not see a great deal, and every small incident became a potential source of interest. And so when the log was passed about stating that at a certain hour in the morning we would cross the Equator, that seemed to suggest something of interest. As I walked up and down the plane, peering out of various windows, with the camera ready, the passengers jokingly asked me, "Are you going to take a picture of the Equator to show the folks at home?" I said, yes, I thought I would. I had heard it was "a menagerie lion that runs around the earth" and I thought it would be most appropriate to have a picture of the line! One of the stewards, helping along with the nonsense, said perhaps we would like to be certified as those who had a right to be subjects of Aeolus, god of the winds, as having crossed the Equator for the first time. And I said I certainly would, and later I did receive a formal certificate saying that I had crossed the Equator, and now was

horized to be a subject of Aeolus, god of the winds. At that time, woke my wife up and said, "I am w authorized to be a bag of wind," l she stayed awake long enough to , "I didn't think you needed a cer- cate for that!" and then went to ep again.

What can we say about the wind, sterious as it is—sometimes strange- variable, and yet having a certain ttern and purpose in its move- nts? Wind is simply air in motion. think it is not unfair to say that sdom about the wind is mostly sdom after the event. We try to ajure up reasons why the wind ws as it does, but there is always couch of mystery about the wind, t blows where it listeth. No man lly knows whence it cometh, or ither it is going. If we knew more n we did, we would suffer less s of property and life than we do. d yet I am going to be so bold as say that there are certain trade nds that speak of the very depend- ility of God himself, winds that w in a consistent way, which set ng mighty currents within the an that move according to a pat- n that can be charted. These winds w with such power that when they behind the waves they can roll m up to great heights. When they w against the waves they can lit- lly flatten them out. These winds take ships quickly to their desti- ion, but if opposed, can hinder the p's progress.

I

The first trade wind I want to men- n, upon which we can depend, is trade wind that tells us that God good. In the nineteenth century the at essayist Henry Froude, in writ- about history, made use of these rds: "One lesson, and only one, his- y may be said to repeat with dis- ctness, that the world was built mehow on moral foundations; but the long run it is well with the od, in the long run it is ill with the wicked." He goes on to say that this is not a belief that has been constructed out of a science of history. It is simply a belief that comes to us out of the Bible. And this is a structural belief—that in the long run you can depend upon it, that God is a God of character.

There are all kinds of religions in the world. There are religions that have a God that lacks character. We are so accustomed to believing in the God as revealed in Jesus Christ, a God of perfect goodness, that sometimes it is a startling thought that many of the religions of the world bring to the minds of the people the story of a God without character. We can rejoice that our God, in whom we believe, can be depended upon to be a good God. We speak of religious inspiration; the very word **inspiration** suggests the wind — the wind blowing in upon our spirits, to refresh us and to invigorate us, to give us new power and new enthusiasm and new zeal and new understanding. Inspiration in the Christian world is always trustworthy. Inspiration in the non-Christian world is never trustworthy. You never know when it is going to betray.

There are always cross winds, as well as trade winds. I was very much intrigued by a sign that I saw along a road, as we were motoring in Zululand. The sign said, "Beware of cross winds." I said to our host, who was driving the car, "What is the meaning of this sign, 'Beware of cross winds'?" "Oh," he said, "although the wind usually blows in a very mild way, occasionally there are cross winds or gusts that blow across the road, and since it is a very small dirt road, and you don't have much room to maneuver, it is possible that that gust of wind might catch you unaware and blow you out of your course." What a picture of life that is! We are going along toward a destination, but suddenly there is some cross wind, a gust, that catches us unaware, and we are involved in

catastrophe before we know it. The impulses that surge up from the subhuman realms and attack the citadel of intelligence and spiritual control are cross winds, and sometimes they can cause disaster.

How often have you heard cynical words spoken about the goodness of God! People will ask, "Does goodness really pay? Does goodness really win? Do not the wicked flourish, spread themselves, as the Bible says, "like the green bay tree"? And do you not read about this kind of question, do you not find this kind of cross wind as you read through the Bible? Certainly as you read through the Book of Psalms or Habbakuk or Jeremiah you find these queryings and questionings raised all the time. Granted that the great trade wind is that God is good, but still these cross winds come sweeping across our path. Is He really good? — then why this tragedy in my life — why this calamity in my home — why this catastrophe in my city — why this horror in the life of nations? These cross winds of doubt blow across our path, and questions are raised that could easily wreck faith. Especially in our time we find that evil is glamourized, and we are told that everybody does it, or everybody thinks it, or everybody reads it. A classic example, of course, of how to go wrong intellectually is to make a solid reading diet of best sellers. "But everybody reads them" — "they tell about life." So cross winds sweep across our path and blow us off our true course.

It is our business as Christians to find the things upon which we can really depend, in the character of God, and then to hold fast to them. Of course, there will be mystery and variableness, and these are the things that give life its piquancy, and redeem it from being just a routine and mechanical existence. But as intelligent Christians we will follow the trade winds, knowing that good will prevail, that it will be ill with those that do ill, and that God can be depended upon, no matter how the cross winds blow.

II

The second trade wind is that God is strong. If God were good but not strong, we would confront the pathos of an amiable but weak diety. Our God is not only morally dependable, but He is so sturdy in His eternal strength, that you can depend upon His being able to make goodness prevail. I think of God as a God in control of the universe, a God who is in control of the physical universe, a God that is in control of the things that have to do with men, a God who is in control of the spiritual realities of Heaven and earth. Our God is not only good; He is also able. And such a God inspires our reverence. We do not come lightly, or with facetious or trivial thoughts into His presence, but we revere His might and His power and we approach Him with reverence. He is the Lord God Almighty, the Maker of all things, the sustainer of all things, the God in whose hands the worlds are held. This God, who is strong, who is able, we revere. He is worthy of our trust.

And yet, although this is our Christian faith, there are cross winds that bring skepticism into our minds. We wonder if God is really in control. If He is, why does He not do something about the problems that we clearly see? If we see life's problems, why does not He? And so the cross winds come and disturb our course. We are tempted to forget about the great prevailing trade wind which is carrying us to our true destination. The cross wind leaves us tempest-tossed, with doubts and uncertainties and fearfulness. Again, let us go back to the Bible. If you want to indulge in doubt, by all means go back to your Bible, for it is an honest story of the dealings of men with God, and of God with men. And as you read such books as Job you read about the encounter men have with God, who are struck with these cross

ds of irresoluteness, uncertainty
l doubt. This is an experience that
common to man. We need not be
amed of it. But those who really
through and reach their destina-
and goal are those who follow
d's trade winds and know that God
ible and strong and believe in His
dness, though appearances may
y it. So Job, buffeted by cross
ds, yet clings to God. And at last
cries out that he has said things
hout knowing what he was talking
ut, that the powerful God of the
at winds is the real God and he
uld have trusted in Him all
ng, and not have become queru-
s because of his personal dis-
sses. And so he says, "I abhor my-
and lay my hand upon my
uth." Yes, when the cross winds
doubt and skepticism sweep us off
course, let us remember that
d's great trade wind will bring us
goal and to a destination. And if
are so presumptuous as to think
t the little storm destroys the
ver of God, then we must come
in into that spirit of humility
ere we recognize we are speaking
ond our knowledge. "The wind
weth where it listeth." God's pur-
es will be maintained for good.

III

The other trade wind I want to
ntion is that God is love, and if it
re not so, we might be very well
pt off our course by all the gusts
modern materialism and pseudo-
ntific wisdom and think that we
bits of dust blown about in a
t impersonal universe. But we who
Christians and who are claimed
Jesus Christ, know that it is not
for we know that God so loved
world that He gave His only be-
ten Son. He came into the world
to condemn the world, but to
e the world. And a God who will
me into the world with a purpose
like that, who might have remained aloof from it, is a God who loves and a God who cares.

This is the greatest trade wind of God's purpose. God brings all of His goodness and all of His strength to focus in His love for us! So it is that the symbol of our faith becomes the cross of Jesus Christ. Yet the cross itself was like a cross wind. When Jesus died, there did not seem to be a great trade wind speaking of the goodness of God and the strength of God. His death was like a cross wind, and it brought doubt and confusion and uncertainty to the minds of the disciples. But so often God takes these cross winds and redeems them, and makes them symbols of His own purpose. So God made it clear that the great trade wind of His love was blowing all the while and would bring all of Christ's followers to their life's true destination.

If we did not know this, would it not be a very lonely world? Is it not a very lonely world for those who do not believe it? No matter how much we cushion ourselves against life's discomforts and inconveniences, still there are those moments when we cannot escape the haunting question: Is the universe really friendly? Does God really care? What are the deeper ranges of our spiiritual life? And if you believe in the great message that comes to us out of the Gospel, then you know "the wind bloweth where it listeth." It brings us a breath of inspiration from God's world where his goodness, His strength and His love prevail, and all the distress and chaos and loneliness and tragedy of the world without God is overcome.

So as we make our life's way, let us thank God that the wind does blow where it listeth and that there is such constant and wonderful purpose in God's great trade winds. If we sail with Him, He will bring us to our haven, and all will be well.

WORTH QUOTING

E. Paul Hovey, The Federated Churches, Lewiston, Idaho

Humility has always been one of the inevitable characteristics of great men. When Thomas Hardy was so famous that any newspaper would gladly have paid enormous sums for his work, he used sometimes to send to a newspaper a poem; and always with it he enclosed a stamped and addressed envelope for the return of his manuscript should it be rejected. Even in his greatness he was humble enough to think that his work might be turned down. — William Barclay, **The Gospel of Luke** (Westminster).

* * * *

One of the lovely things that has been said of the stories of the Bible was said a few years ago by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. She says of many of the stories, "They are so simple that they are like empty cups for people to fill with their own experiences and drink for their own need over and over again, through the years." Think how the story of the lonely Jacob, who used a stone for a pillow, ministers to our own loneliness. The story of Joseph in Egypt, finding God's help in temptation, brings help to us. Think of the encouragement of Jesus' story of the widow's giving two pennies. Pass your cup to drink to your own need.

—Halford Luccock

* * * *

Man . . . is the most formidable of all the beasts of prey, and indeed the only one that preys systematically on his own species.

—William James

* * * *

Christianity is strange. For its refusal to give up the word "sin" is a blessing in disguise. Its real motive in bidding man to recognize that he is vile is a humane motive. Only by recognizing the evil in ourselves, can we learn compassion for others. Only by joining with others in a confession of need, can we find forgiveness and strength. It is as though we must first be made brothers in mutual contrition, before we can become brothers in mutual trust. — David E. Roberts, **The Grandeur and Misery of Man.**

Walter Russell Bowie in a sermon, "Work Out Your Own Salvation," stresses the truth that "even the great mercy of God will not force a man to be saved against his will. He must want salvation. He must go after it, like the merchant seeking goodly pearls." To undergird this basic truth he tells the following story: "In a little town there was once an old preacher, not learned but full of sense as well as of sincerity, who used to preach often on predestination. A local politician of some note met him one day and said to him, 'I hear you preach a lot about predestination, and about those who will be the elect to heaven. What about me? Do you think I will be elected?' To which the preacher replied: 'Well, sir, you run for city council once, and you got elected. Then you run for mayor, and you got elected to that. Then you run for Congress, and you got elected to that. And now you ask me if I think you might be among the elect for heaven. But I don't see how you can get elected to something that you ain't running for.' "

* * * *

The act of giving warms the heart. It generates the sense of compassion we all need to feel. It gives us an awarenes of the good life around us. Giving is an art that must be practiced not whenever the fancy moves us, but as a part of our daily life. Wordsworth tells us how much to give: "Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore of nicely calculated less or more."

* * * *

Accident: an event frequently descended from a long line of advice not listened to. — Marcelene Cox.